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NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

OR

Common-sense Policy

BY

FRANCIS FRANCIS

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NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

OR

A COMMON-SENSE POLICY

Fiscal Question

NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

OR

A COMMON-SENSE POLICY

BY

FRANCIS FRANCIS

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EMPLOYMENT DEMANDS PROTECTION

In every State there will be certain industries which require protection, certain materials which it is vitally important to admit free of duty.

The policy which rules so all-pervading an interest as national trade must deeply affect the character of a people.

In these days of vast and increasing populations the chief problem of trade is to provide the greatest possible amount of healthy, stable, and profitable employment for the masses.

No amount of financial wealth will continue to support large masses of unemployed in a nation.

Under existing competition goods can only be sold at a profit when produced cheaply.

There are only two ways of producing cheaply—by production on a large scale, and by production with cheap labour. The first of these is denied to us.

When cheap production depends upon wages, Trade Unions, by raising wages, raise the price of goods. In so doing, they exclude them from neutral markets. This involves the decline of the very industries in which the Trade Unions are interested.

Labour may be divided under the heads of skilled and sweated labour. There is employment for only a certain amount of skilled labour in the world. The more we secure of it the less we need resort to sweated labour.

Both Free Trade and Protection have done their share of mischief in the world. The country which adopts either policy exclusively must suffer for it in the long run. There will always be certain industries in every State which require protection, certain materials which it is folly not to admit free. Why not be guided by these self-evident considerations, and use Free Trade or Protection impartially, as circumstances demand? Is

there any practical reason for adhering to a strictly exclusive policy? Is not such a course as senseless as it would be for anyone to abjure the use of the word "Yes," and rely only upon the word "No" to carry him through life?

The policy which rules so all-pervading and vital an interest as national trade must deeply influence the character of the people whose living depends upon its action. Of the two policies, exclusive Free Trade, in its subtle and far-reaching effects, is more disastrous than exclusive Protection. This is but natural. An energetic and practical policy, whatever its faults, is bound directly or indirectly to be productive of a certain amount of good. Disregarding, for the moment, its economic effects, we see this, in so far as Protection is concerned, in the general interest in public affairs, the public spirit, and healthy patriotism displayed in protected countries. A merely theoretic policy, however, like Free Trade—a policy of slothful inaction and insincere sentimentality—produces very different results. These may be traced in the marked absence of any interest in affairs of State, in the irresponsible character and apathetic spirit so distinctive of the British nation to-day. Under Protection everyone receives from his country's policy more

or less direct advantages which he can see and understand; he also suffers more or less direct and slight privations for the general good. The policy is constructive in spirit, and is strongly educative and invigorating; it brings a people into close touch with their Government. Such Free Trade as ours, however, which has but one honest argument, "Cheapness," and is otherwise only theory based upon sham sentiment, is in its general influence degrading, enervating, and disintegrating.

In regulating the trade of a country recourse to both Free Trade and Protection is necessary. This would be more evident if we realised more clearly the ultimate function of modern trade. In these days of vast and increasing populations, the chief problem of trade is that of providing the greatest possible amount of healthy, stable, and profitable employment for the masses. Great wealth may co-exist with dire poverty. This is proved in Great Britain to-day. Notwithstanding her wealth, a very large proportion of her population is unemployed and destitute; and no wealth can continue to support so great and growing a burden as this section of the people seems likely to prove. It is not always fully realised how quickly wealth, which is not legitimately reproduc-

tive, vanishes; nor how enormous becomes the drain which is perpetual. Unemployment with us is a heavy burden. Profitable employment for the masses should, therefore, be the chief end and aim of any interference in the conduct of the nation's trade. The proper reward of the employer, in so far as his interests coincide with those of the country, will naturally and inevitably accrue.

Relief, charity, and the like are of necessity only limited and temporary resources, since, instead of being reproductive, their action, by destroying character, is more likely to prove a sterilising influence. Sooner or later the average man will have to depend upon his own labour for his own living. He can only do so successfully when the goods his labour helps to produce can be sold at a profit. Since competition, either internal or external, is universal nowadays, goods can only be sold at a profit when they have been produced cheaply. There are but two methods of producing goods cheaply. The first and most efficacious of these is to manufacture them upon a large scale. The second is to produce them with cheap labour. In a Free Trade country, surrounded by Protected neighbours, the first method is not feasible, since, without any market upon which he can rely, a producer's operations are naturally

insecure and consequently restricted We are forced, therefore, to adopt the alternative. In order to meet competition we are obliged to reduce wages; and, automatically, this movement is actually proceeding in this country to-day. Hitherto the Trade Unions, which control our skilled labour, have refused to bow to it. The result is seen in the decline of our staple industries. The demand for skilled labour does not increase in anything like its due proportion to our increase in population. Trade Unions may control skilled labour, and with it the cost to us of production; but since they cannot control foreign competition, nor regulate the prices it establishes, they cannot ensure employment to their members—in other words, they cannot ensure a demand for our goods at prices that are profitable.

The cheapening of labour will therefore continue in spite of any action they may take; and, as a nation, it will be found that we are gradually being forced to abandon skilled industries, and adopt low-class trades and sweated industries as a means of livelihood. The sooner we realise that this is the inevitable result of our exclusive Free Trade policy the better.

There is employment for only a limited amount of skilled labour in the world. The

industrial nations of to-day are each and all fighting to secure as much of that employment as possible. The more any one of them does secure the less sweated labour will it have to perform.

WHY ANY EXCLUSIVE POLICY ?

Free Trade and Protection are not matters of faith and principle. They are simply trade weapons, to be used as occasion demands.

No sane man wants to jump out of the strait-waistcoat of Free Trade into the prison cell of Protection.

The industries of a country are closely interdependent. To foster one at the expense of another brings retribution. The fact that agriculture here was killed in the interests of the cotton trade should be an abiding lesson to us.

The good of the nation at large is the best insurance for individual interests.

FREE Trade and Protection are not matters of faith and principle, and should not be so regarded. No single expedient can meet all

cases that arise. We do not set the sails of a ship when she leaves port and refuse until the end of a voyage to change them. We do not insist that every ship shall be steered a certain course, and in a certain manner, regardless of wind or weather. Why, then, steer the barque of national industry with the helm fixed to one course? Free Trade and Protection are mischievous terms. They lead us to take sides, and blind us to the fact that, applied wisely and in their proper circumstances, both are useful. They should be considered merely as trade weapons. Since advantage may be reaped from a judicious use of either, why be bound to use only one of them? Such a course is prejudicial and childish. The man who takes out only one gun for partridge driving will lose a lot of birds that he might have killed with two. He will lose still more birds if he allows a jealous shot with two guns to stand in front of him. Business should be dealt with in an unprejudiced spirit. No sane man wishes to jump out of the strait-waistcoat of Free Trade into the prison cell of Protection. He wishes to be free to deal with trade issues as they arise, in a practical and businesslike way. What it suits us to protect we should be able to protect; what it suits us to import free we should be able to import free. And

these matters should be settled with an eye always to the benefit of the nation at large, not with regard to any class or trade selfishness. The interests and industries of a country are intimately interdependent. To foster one at the expense of another will bring about its own punishment. Unless the body be healthy the members cannot continue to flourish. Agriculture in this country was killed in the supposed interests of the "consumers." This should be an abiding lesson to us. If agriculture had had fair play, our position would have been a very different one to-day. Our loss in agricultural values alone is estimated, in the last thirty years, to have been £1,700,000,000. We have lost in character, and courage, and spirit, and physique, in patriotism and power by not having a healthy peasantry to supply the waste incurred in industrial pursuits. Much of our best blood has emigrated and been lost to us. Our home market, therefore, has not improved as it should have done. Many of our national difficulties, and much of our national weakness, proceeds from our being dependent upon foreign nations for food. It neutralises the advantages of our insular position, and converts the "silver streak," which should be our defence, into a danger to us. Before and above all should be con-

sidered the good of the nation at large. In fostering this do we best foster individual interests. Indeed, it may be said that in this way only can individual interests be permanently fostered.

THE FREE TRADE TRAP

Free Trade was but a clumsy confidence trick. It sought to fix other nations in industrial subordination to us, and secure to ourselves in perpetuity the manufacturing monopoly we at that time possessed.

In adopting Free Trade we were caught in our own trap. That we should have refused, against all proof, for over sixty years, to admit that it was a trap is the most colossal instance of national fatuity the world has ever seen.

FREE Trade has proved disastrous in practice; it was never anything but a medley of fallacy and cunning in point of theory. The motive that lay beneath it was always evident; the whole thing was only a stupid confidence trick, disguised in pedantry. Despite their protested philanthropy, the apostles of Free Trade felt no real interest in the advancement

of humanity at large. On the contrary. They sought to fix other nations in their then industrial subordination to us. They sought, disingenuously, to secure to ourselves for all time the monopoly in trade and manufactures which we had already obtained. They failed; and to-day the whole world of industry jeers at us for the clumsy attempt and for our persistent adherence to a policy which has proved such an absolute failure.

We had a monopoly of the world's manufactures. This might have been thought to be sufficient. Nevertheless, a band of greedy busybodies arose who could not leave well alone. *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien.* They preached Free Trade, garnished with cant and false sentiment. They said to the rest of the world: "Let's all produce that which we can produce most easily and naturally and cheaply. In this way there will be no waste of time, of money, or of effort. *We* have the plant, the capital, the skilled labour, and the knowledge required to manufacture cheaply. *You* have advantages that enable you to cultivate raw material cheaply. *You* produce the raw material; *we'll* do the manufacturing." In other words: "You go on for ever and ever producing raw stuff, and we'll go on for ever and ever making the money out of it."

It is always a sign of folly to assume that other people are fools. The world was not so simple as Messrs. Cobden and Bright supposed. The prospect of remaining our slaves for ever did not appeal to other nations. They coveted the good things of this life as much as we did. When, therefore, we set them the example of adopting Free Trade, they—did not follow it. We were caught in our own trap. So far, so good. Any idiot may be caught in a trap. It occurs, however, to most people who are trapped to endeavour to extricate themselves. To sit fatuously smiling in our trap, stolidly pleading with those who passed us by in achievements: "This isn't a trap. We're not caught. Get in and see"—to do this, I say, obstinately for over sixty years without making the slightest effort to escape from our ridiculous position is probably the most colossal instance of national fatuity that the world has ever seen. A sense of humour might have saved us from it.

PROTECTION ENRICHED US, NOT FREE TRADE

It cannot be too often or too emphatically stated that our wealth is the result of Protection in the past and not of Free Trade, either past or present.

The fact that a nation is able for a time to withstand the evil effects of exclusive Free Trade does not prove the policy to be a wise one. Even destruction takes time.

Had we preserved a policy of modified Protection, the Empire would long ago have been consolidated.

No one will ever be able to calculate the injury done to the British race by the apostles of Free Trade. They crippled us when on the brink of Empire, and wrecked the greatest national career that was ever launched.

It cannot be too often or too emphatically stated that our wealth is the result of Protection in the past, and not of Free Trade, either

past or present. Our staple industries, our shipping interest, all the active sources of that prosperity which can no longer be said to be ours, were implanted, grew up, and matured here under a system of rigid Protection. When we adopted Free Trade we had a balance of trade in our favour of £66,000,000. Free Trade has converted this into a balance of trade against us of £150,000,000. If we omitted from all calculation the amount which we receive from the export of coal (which is capital), and from investments abroad, or private income (which no accountant would dare to class as a current business asset in auditing the books of a company), the legitimate balance of trade against us would largely exceed £150,000,000.

When we adopted Free Trade we had a practical monopoly of the world's capital and banking business; we had a practical monopoly of the world's manufactures, commerce, and skilled labour; we had a practical monopoly of the world's carrying trade; incidentally, we were also the world's engineers. In short we had an all round monopoly. What could Protection give us more than this? We alone employed the new mechanical inventions of Arkwright and others. We were the first to apply the giant power steam, which since those days has

revolutionised the world. With such assistance, and with the impetus we had gained already, our industries and trade continued for years to expand, and defy competition. But the forces of disintegration were none the less at work. The fact that a strong man is able to take a certain amount of poison without succumbing to it does not prove that poison to be a tonic. Let him continue to take it when his strength and constitution have been sapped and he yet may die from it. Free Traders, therefore, need not despair. We are getting weaker. The doctrinaire may yet achieve our ruin—if we can be induced to swallow enough of rigid Free Trade.

It is always unwise to kick down the ladder by which you have climbed. The temporary congestion and depression due to over-production, from which our manufacturers were suffering when we adopted Free Trade, might have been relieved as easily and far more safely by a temporary modification of our tariffs. At the same time the inestimable advantage of being able to protect ourselves in case of need would still have been preserved to us, and our position to-day would certainly have been stronger even than it was then. Undoubtedly, if we had retained a policy of modified Protection, the Empire would long ago have been consolidated; the Colonies by

this time would have become teeming nations, and to-day we might have been the greatest Power the world has ever seen. Free Trade drugged us into slumber and stagnation. Continued Protection would have spurred our already (for those times) immensely developed enterprise and intelligence to greater efforts. No one will ever be able to estimate the colossal injury done to the British race by the apostles of Free Trade. They crippled us upon the verge of Empire, and wrecked the greatest national career that ever yet was launched.

What now are our prospects for the future? The gigantic manufacturing powers of the United States and Germany are still only approaching maturity. The injury they have inflicted upon us is already vast. Nevertheless, it is only in the days to come that we shall learn the real meaning of the word "trouble." Sooner or later periods of depression resulting from over-production will oblige the manufacturers of America and Germany to sacrifice vast surplus stocks at nominal prices. Then will our staple industries receive blows such as will make our past calamities appear but child's play.

Protection enriched us, not Free Trade. Such also has been the experience of other great trading and industrial nations. Even

with the Dutch in the days of their supremacy, Free Trade merely meant that they denied the right of anyone to close a market against them. At the same time, they themselves sought for, and fought for, and maintained, exclusive privileges and monopolies wherever this was possible. These were probably more effective than Protection. Human nature being what it is, it stands to reason that the sources of wealth require protection not less than wealth itself. To business men, the shop and goodwill of the business will often prove more attractive than the till.

FREE TRADE POISONS PATRIOTISM

Great Britain is a Colossus with feet of Free Trade.

Free Trade is as destructive of patriotism as it is of national independence.

The country which protects only the consumer, and relies for wealth upon the banker an trader, has poisoned the springs of patriotism.

Sentiments are influenced by the pressure of material interests.

Corn will always buy gold; gold will not always buy corn.

GREAT BRITAIN is a Colossus with feet of—Free Trade.

Free Trade is as destructive of character and patriotism as it is of national indepen-

dence. The country which gets its food from abroad, which neglects the interests of its producers for those of its consumers, which relies for its wealth upon the banker and trader, may be said in a great measure to have poisoned the springs of patriotism. Practical people will recognise the fact that the constant pressure of material interests must ultimately influence men's feelings. It matters little to the banker and trader whether they deal in foreign exchanges and goods or in those of native origin. Their interests may even come to lie more exclusively abroad. When food is drawn from thence, the interests of the masses also are apt to be transferred from their own to foreign countries. Those of the manufacturer and farmer must ever remain more intimately connected with their native land; consequently they will be more interested in its independence. Their natural feelings of patriotism will become naturally intensified; whereas in the case of bankers, merchants, middlemen, &c., the reverse will be the case. History provides us with many instances of great nations in the past that lost the patriotic instinct, owing to their neglect of agriculture and home industries for commerce and finance. Healthy industry alone contributes to the healthy enrichment of a nation. The mere manipulation of the means of exchange

—financial operations and the piling up of gold that may result from them—is not necessarily wealth, because it is not necessarily strength. Corn will always buy gold; gold will not always buy corn.

KILL INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE DIES

Free Trade has done more harm than good to the British manufacturer.

Kill the agricultural and manufacturing interests in a country, and commerce and banking will not long survive.

Without a national policy that prevents national industries from selfishly destroying one another, no nation can continue to prosper. Agriculture was killed here mainly in the interests of the cotton trade.

It is still a bold statement to make, but in a few years' time its truth will probably be generally recognised, that Free Trade has done far more harm than good to the manufacturer in this country. As already stated.

the relief we sought (mainly from troubles due to over-production) at the time that we adopted Free Trade might have been far better afforded by a temporary modification of tariffs. The most that Free Trade has done for us has been to facilitate and simplify the procedure of business for the merchant and banker. In other words, it has led us to cultivate the extremities at the expense of the body. The backbone of a nation must always be the agriculturist and the manufacturer. These, the true producers in any country, form the health-giving body from which spring the limbs of commerce and finance. Take care of the producer, and incidentally the banker and merchant are protected. But kill the manufacturing and farming interests, and commerce and banking will not long survive. Free Trade killed our agriculture; it is now in process of killing our manufacturing interests.

Without a national policy which safeguards employment and prevents national industries and interests from destroying one another at the instigation of selfishness, no nation can retain a foremost position. Our policy is a policy of dog eat dog. The injury done to agriculture in the interests of the cotton trade has been cited. The arbitrary policy of our railways, and the preferential rates they make

in favour of the foreigner, injure all our industries. Both cotton trade and railways undoubtedly suffer from the stagnation in trade and loss in national power and independence that results from their action.

THEORIES ARE DANGEROUS GUIDES

For sixty years we have wandered in the wilderness of Free Trade without reaching the Promised Land of Prosperity. All of "promise" that we encounter are the fatuous promises of Free Traders.

Free Trade was formulated in the bow-and-arrow days of trade, when business men were amateurs, and trade was simply shopping.

Nowadays the race is to the strong; change follows too quickly for the slow to win.

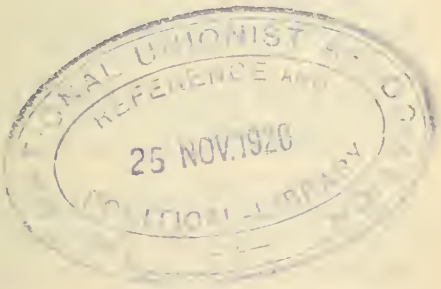
Distance is now annihilated. All the world lies next door, or at most but a few streets away.

Our sole trade weapon is the handful of dirty mud called "cheapness."

For sixty years we have wandered in the wilderness of Free Trade, without reaching the Promised Land of Prosperity. We seem, in fact, to get further away from it. All of "promise" that we encounter are the fatuous promises of the Free Traders, which have as little to do with performance as the historical prediction of the false prophet Cobden that, "in five years," all the world would follow our example and adopt Free Trade. Cobden was a theorist and a doctrinaire. In practical business he became a bankrupt. Let us rather take warning from his example than cling to it. Unsubstantiated theories are dangerous guides in the practical problems of business and trade. Successful nations no longer rely upon them. They may encourage the invention and discussion of theories, but they only adopt them on the authority of practical experiment and experience. It is this that actually guides them. The doctrine of exclusive Free Trade, besides having been purely speculative, included a large element of sentiment—or, to speak strictly, of sham sentiment, and consequently an unusual margin for error. It was launched in what were practically the bow-and-arrow days of trade, when, as compared with what is to-day the case, business men were amateurs, and trade was simple shopping. Such a doctrine

may have been comparatively innocuous at the time of its inception. In the present altered conditions of industry, it is insanity. These are the days of vast organisations in business, and of masterful methods. The race is now to the active and the strong; change follows too quickly for the slow to have time to win. The prize is out of date, the race itself forgotten before they reach the tape. To all intents and purposes even geography—the face of the earth—has altered. Distance is now annihilated. All the world lies next door, or at most but a few streets off. Science and art, inventive ability and tactical genius—the best brains of all the most highly civilised races that exist—have been focussed upon one point—industrial development. This concentration has not taken place without rendering the object of it complex—a problem to test the keenest intelligence. And we apply to it—to this the most complicated problem of the day—the old windmill wisdom and stage-coach theories of nearly seventy years ago. Is it worthy of a nation that still esteems common sense to continue to deprive itself of all trade weapons save the handful of dirty mud called "cheapness"; and because it fails even to make this "stick," to sit in disheartened apathy and groan? We are losing ground steadily and surely. As time

goes on it is certain that, under our present policy, we shall lose ground still more rapidly. Can any position be worse than this? Would not an experiment in Protection be wise, whilst we have yet something in the way of trade to save? It scarcely could injure us now.



INDUSTRIAL DISPLACEMENTS SPELL RUIN

The strongest industry will not withstand unfair competition any more than the strongest man will necessarily survive being stabbed in the back.

Large output is the dominant factor in achieving cheapness of production. Our Free Trade policy denies us this advantage.

The channels of our industry are changing from skilled to sweated trades.

The power of wealth lies in the power of the hand that grasps it.

Strength and capital attract each other. From a country that is industrially unsound, capital will steal away to aid that country's stronger rivals.

The prosperity of a country lies in growing industries, and in the character of its people. These are true capital; wealth is but the interest on them.

The Free Trader, irresponsible and optimistic cosmopolitan that he is, is unmoved by the destruction of an industry in his own country. To the man who has been accustomed to live by it, he says: "Adopt another trade. If the one you follow cannot compete with dumped, and bounty-fed imports, it is not a healthy trade; therefore it ought to die." As well say: "If you cannot survive being stabbed in the back, you are not fit to live." The Free Trader ignores the fact that the competition from which our trades suffer is not fair competition. It is competition with opponents who, in most cases, mainly by reason of the benefits which they derive from the free use of our markets, are enabled to produce upon a large scale. Large output is the dominant factor in achieving cheapness of production. This overwhelming advantage we enable others to realise but deny to our own manufacturers, since we allow them no market upon which they can depend. Their adversaries have two—their own, which is assured to them, and equal rights in Great

Britain with ourselves. As a matter of fact, owing to the discrimination exercised by our railways in their favour, and to the further consideration that they can trade here practically tax free, foreigners enjoy an advantage over our own people even in our own markets, over and above that which they derive from their ability to produce goods on a larger scale, and consequently more cheaply than ourselves.

The indifference of Free Traders to the destruction of our trades, and the triviality of their advice to those who suffer from it, to seek other employments, indicate a lamentable inability to grasp the situation. As a result of our Free Trade policy, *no new industry of any importance has taken root in the country for the past twenty years*.[1] The number of our occupations is by no means inexhaustible. How are we to employ ourselves when our staple industries have been killed? Obviously we must follow those low-class trades and sweated industries in which protected nations are too prosperous to compete with us. The fact is generally admitted that the channels of labour here are changing in this direction. Since 1872 our staple industries have been stagnant or have declined. The cotton trade alone may be cited in contradiction of this statement. But it should

[1] *Protection*, by G. Byng, p. 25.

be noted that, although in 1902 we exported nearly 1,800,000,000 more yards of cotton goods than in 1872, we received £3,700,000 less in return.[1] Even allowing for cheaper methods of production, it would seem probable that the margin of profit upon cotton manufactures is largely decreasing. Moreover, Lancashire is likely to lose some of her best markets in the near future unless our decline in national power be arrested. Apparently, therefore, the cotton industry here was only stronger, originally, and had greater power of resistance than other trades; evidently it must succumb eventually to the same influences. To equal the advance made in it by protected nations, it should have doubled or trebled in importance, instead of barely holding its own.

To come back to our point—the destruction of our industries and the consequent obligations upon labour of seeking fresh employment. Ignoring the loss of capital suffered by the employer, it is obvious that to the workman, whose acquired skill and experience are his capital, this must entail a loss in productive value, since in the course of his career he again and again becomes an unskilled hand. If we consider also (owing to the time during which he remains out of employment) his loss

[1] *The Tariff Problem*, by W. J. Ashley, pp. 61–62.

in money, his possible deterioration in health and strength due to hard times, the fact that enforced idleness is apt to engender undesirable habits even in men of strong character, and the further fact that our workman is eventually obliged to accept, and accept permanently, a lower grade of employment and wages than were his originally, the mischief done becomes evident. Mischief of the same nature results from the long periods of depression in trade entailed by dumping in our markets. When these influences extend over years, and are at work upon an immense scale, their baleful import is scarcely to be overestimated.

The prosperity of a country is not necessarily assured by large accumulations of capital, and financial activity. Capital, although owned at home, may exercise most of its productivity abroad. The power of wealth is measured by the power of the hand that grasps it. Strength and capital attract each other. From a country that is industrially unsound capital will steal away to aid her growing rivals. The real prosperity of a country lies in expanding industries and in the health and vigour and character of her people. These are true capital; wealth is only the interest upon them.

INDEPENDENCE THE ONLY POLICY

Not even the industry of making a bootlace should be allowed to leave this country unheeded.

The world is becoming a very close trade preserve. Free Trade is trespass in protected countries.

In the days of fierce international competition now dawning, the nation that is most independent will lead.

Dependent races in the future will become the sweated races and drudges of the world—paupers whose countries will be used as industrial dustbins by their rivals.

There is only one policy safe at all points for the guidance of a nation. That policy is national independence—in food, in manufactures, in arms, in everything.

In connection with the foregoing remarks, there is another point from which the destruction of any trade that has become established in a country, and that supplies a public demand, may be viewed with anxiety. The loss of any such trade means the loss of a certain amount of national independence. Not even the industry of manufacturing bootlaces should be allowed to leave a country unquestioned and uninvestigated. The world is becoming a very close trade preserve, or, rather, a chain of very close trade preserves is closing around us. Trading privileges in the future will be scanned vigilantly and studied scientifically. Nations will deal with each other with relentless parsimony. Whether this will eventually bring about an economic crisis, and, in the interests of thrift, enforce world-wide Free Trade, is another matter. Before this comes to pass, much prejudice will have to be overcome. It will not occur in our time, for it will not in our time have become imperative. We have first to pass through an era in which national independence will be the aim of all. In the days of fierce international competition that are now beginning, the people who are most independent will occupy the most advantageous position, whereas those most dependent upon others will become the sweated races

and drudges of the world—paupers whose countries will be the world's industrial dustbins. The danger of our present position is evident. We have lost our independence in food; we are in process of losing it in staple manufactures. We, who had once a monopoly of skilled labour, are being forced to undertake the low-class, sweated trades that foreigners despise. The end, if we persist in our present course, is obvious. It is not too late to adopt a fresh policy, or, rather, to revert to that policy which originally made us great. It embodied a grand principle, one safe at all points for the guidance of a nation. That principle was national independence—independence in food, independence in manufactures, independence in arms, independence in everything. This used to be our traditional policy. It made us what we were—but are no longer—the leading nation upon earth. Not until we revert to it shall we again be great. Then, and then only, will our courage be restored to us. There is yet time for us to shake off our lethargy and start afresh. But the sands are running out. A little while, and it will be too late.

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THE FATAL POLICY OF *LAISSEZ FAIRE*

Exports range from the products of skilled labour to sweated goods or even national capital. The difference represents that between prosperity and poverty.

Our food is not cheap. Even if it were so, it would be dearly bought at the expense of sweated labour and unemployment.

No Government can shirk its natural responsibilities without these returning to it in an exaggerated form.

Trade is the very life-blood of the nation. Like everything else left to chance it will deteriorate.

There is no direction in which a Government can more legitimately interfere than in leading Trade to furnish that employment

without which the masses must always remain upon the border-line of destitution.

The Free Trade doctrine that, in order to import something, we must manufacture and export something else to pay for it, may be theoretically true. In practical matters of business, however, theories are dangerous guides. That "something else" may be the finished product of skilled, highly-paid, and healthy industry, or it may be the cheap product of sweated labour. It may even take the form of temporary commissions or profits squeezed out of the consumer by the middleman. Worse than this, it may be national capital such as coal, china, or fire clays, &c., of which we have but a limited supply that can never be replaced.

Moreover, the imports themselves may be ruinous in their effects, and quite unnecessary. We import, for instance, vast quantities of food-stuffs which we could not only easily produce for ourselves, but produce under the very healthiest conditions for labour. Even admitting that by importing these we secure them at a reduced price,[1] they

[1] *Has* Free Trade cheapened our food? In a book called *The Hungry Forties*, Mrs. Fisher Unwin, a daughter of Cob-

are dearly bought when, in order to pay for them, we must have recourse to sweated labour, and the export of national capital. They are thrice dearly bought when, in order to secure them, we neutralise the advantages of the "silver streak," and convert our defensive position, as islanders, into a danger in time of war, owing to the facilities it affords for starving us into submission.

The fact is that no Government can divest itself of its proper functions, and shirk its natural responsibilities without these returning to it in an exaggerated form. To prate about "individual effort" and the dangers of "paternal Government" avails not. A mere profession of superstitious faith such as exclusive Free Trade becomes upon examination, affords no excuse for a gross dereliction from duty. In our case such professions are rank hypocrisy, for no Government is readier than a British Government to interfere with paternal legislation when, by doing so, it can secure the votes of an influential clique.

den, quotes the following prices as ruling in 1843: A 4 lb. loaf, 6d.; 1 lb. cheese, 2d.; 1 lb. butter, 7d.; 1 lb. bacon, 3d.; 1 lb. beef, 4d.; 20 lb. potatoes, 2d.; 20 eggs, 8d. Compare these prices with those current to-day, after over sixty years of Free Trade. They will make many a modern housewife envious.

Trade is the very life-blood of the nation. Like everything else left to chance, it will drift into evil courses and deteriorate. There is nothing in which the impartial judgment, the judicious assistance, and the vast amount of information at the disposal of Government is more urgently needed than in regulating Trade. The unique position of a Government enables it constantly to feel the pulse of national interests in this respect. And in no direction could it interfere more legitimately than in leading Trade to furnish that employment without which the masses must always remain upon the border-line of destitution.

The aim of every Government should be, firstly: The independence of the country in everything in which independence can be achieved. This will be found to include its economic welfare. Secondly: The provision of steady employment for the masses. A practical and scientific view of this responsibility will be found to include the duty of strengthening as far as possible the character of the people, instead of, as at present, enervating and weakening it by sentimental legislation. And these matters should be sacred from party strife in politics. An independent nation, steadily employed, will always have sufficient wealth for all its needs. Excessive wealth

must always be unevenly distributed, and is as detrimental in the case of nations as of individuals. In the long run no man can have more than enough, for more than this destroys him.

"CHEAP AND NASTY"

Be goods ever so cheap, the poor man still cannot purchase to advantage, for he buys not when he may, but when he must.

The man who is forced to buy, and forced to buy cheaply, has lost the privilege of economising.

The pursuit of cheapness is the pursuit of poverty.

The aim of the working classes should be high wages, not cheap goods. Public opinion will never resist the rise of wages, but will always oppose high prices in connection with food.

INDEPENDENCE cannot flourish where working classes are forced to worship the false god, Cheapness. Be goods ever so cheap, the poor man still cannot purchase to advantage; for he buys not when a favourable

opportunity arises, but only when necessity compels. His purchases are not regulated by the state of the market, nor even by that of his own pocket, but proceed from his unavoidable necessities. Such being the case, he must always pay dearly for everything. That man, and that man only, is independent who can afford to purchase with discrimination, and purchase a good article at a fair price. Such articles are not as a rule to be bought cheaply. The man who is forced to buy, and forced moreover to buy cheaply, has lost the privilege of economising. The pursuit of cheapness is the pursuit of poverty. These words should be emblazoned in our Houses of Parliament. The aim of the working classes and of all those who have their interests at heart should be high wages, not cheap goods. The standard of wages in the United States proves that there is no practical limit to the rate these may attain. So long, however, as it is within the power of Government to regulate them by tariffs, public opinion will always prevent the prices of food from becoming exorbitant. With wages in the United States more than double the rate of wages here, and the cost of living but a small percentage higher, surely the policy of Protection is vindicated in so far as the workman is concerned.

OUR UNEARNED INCREMENT

The more recent increase in our trade is due mainly to "unearned increment" resulting from the enterprise and prosperity of our neighbours.

Do we to-day furnish the world's leaders in industry? Do not we rather float complacently with the tide as passengers and supercargoes under the direction of foreigners?

Low-class, sweated industries are symptoms of industrial disease.

If our calculations as to exports were based upon the same skilled industries and staple goods as account for the prosperity of our rivals, it would be found that we are being left at the post.

Free Traders harp upon the fact that within the last twenty years our export trade has largely increased. It seems, however, justifiable to suppose that this is not due to our own enterprise, still less to the action of our Free Trade policy. In the earlier phases of Free Trade in this country, our advance was due, among other reasons, to the monopoly and impetus that we had gained under Protection. In its later periods the increase in question has been nothing but "unearned increment," resulting from the enterprise and prosperity of our neighbours. It is many years since Great Britain set the pace in the industrial world. Meanwhile our rivals have created and developed industries and trades, markets, countries, and demands to a greater degree than they have been able to use or satisfy. They have enormously extended the field and raised the standard of prosperity, and with it, consequently, the normal volume of trade. We, owing to our accumulated capital, have profited by this expansion and by the enhanced values that it has established. But what has individual British enterprise created or established during this time? Do we, to-day, furnish the leaders of industry, commerce, or finance? Do not we rather, as a people, float complacently with the tide as passengers, supercargoes, or sub-

ordinates under the leadership of foreigners? It is futile to point to an increase in our export trade, if that increase is not only not a legitimate and healthy one, but also, is not in proportion to the export growth of our rivals, and does not even maintain our own former standards. Between 1890 and 1907 British exports increased by 50 per cent., German by 124 per cent., and the United States by 320 per cent. In 1872 our exports amounted to £8 1s. per head of the population. In 1901 this rate was reduced to £6 14s. 10d. These comparisons tell their own tale. When three men race for a prize, and at the end of a given time A has travelled ten miles, B twenty-five miles, and C sixty-four miles, the performance of A does not call for much congratulation. Their prize being the lead in industries, and, incidentally, in commerce and finance also, Great Britain, the ten mile sprinter, is evidently outclassed. Our position would appear still less satisfactory were we frankly to admit to ourselves that even the ox-waggon rate of speed we do maintain is more apparent than real. We count among our exports the coal, clays, etc., that we send abroad. These are undeniably capital, and should not be classed as ordinary exports. We count as "invisible exports" the income we receive from foreign invest-

ments, which has no more to do with our actual trade than a bootmaker's private income has to do with what he makes or loses in his business. We count as exports, the goods which our astute rivals ship through this country in order that they may take advantage of the preference rates allowed us by our Colonies. We count also the goods produced by our sweated trades—trades in which the leading protected countries are without the cheap labour necessary to enable them to compete successfully with us. This last item is, no doubt, a legitimate credit so far as it goes. But low-class, sweated industries are symptoms of industrial disease. It is melancholy that we should have to depend upon disease in order to balance our accounts. If our calculations as to exports were based upon the same skilled and healthy industries as account for the prosperity of our rivals, it would be found that we are being left at the post.

FREE TRADE A SPITEFUL MISTRESS

Sham producers can only supply imaginary wants.

It is better to protect employment, and so obviate unemployment, than to protect the unemployed, and so encourage paupers.

Exclusive Free Trade is the greatest labour-saving system ever invented. Witness the armies of our unemployed.

"WORK for the unemployed, provided by the State."

What is this but Protection in a most futile, farcical, and pernicious form! How can the Free Trader reconcile it with his Cherish-the-Consumer Conscience to engage the State in producing, at a dead loss, that which is unnecessary. Sham producers occupied in supplying imaginary wants! Is this Free Trade?

Is it possible to "divert labour from more to less profitable employment" than this? Free Trade is certainly a most thankless and spiteful mistress. She is ever leading her poor, blind followers into positions wherein they must immolate their principles, and commit suicide of conscience. Instead of finding artificial work for the unemployed, would it not be wiser to protect legitimate employment, and so obviate unemployment? Would it not be better to protect work, and encourage workmen, than to wait until men are out of work, and then protect and encourage paupers? Exclusive Free Trade is the greatest labour-saving system that was ever invented. Witness the armies of our unemployed.

THE FERTILITY OF CHARACTER

Free Trade sought to stereotype and confine within specified channels all branches of industry.

The character of a people often proves to be more fertile than their country's soil.

Indolent races rarely produce more than enough to support life. Only the vigorous race produces a surplus.

How different is the face of the industrial world to-day from what it would have been had Free Trade spread to other countries, choked their nascent industries, and made the world a sort of stagnant Chinese world, of which Great Britain was the workshop.

The old Free Trade doctrine that Protection diverts industry from more to less advantageous employment was doubtless plausible.

There is, however, another side to the question. Is it in the interests of advance to do away with international competition? Is it in the interests of any nation to be bound down perpetually to the one or two industries in which that nation or its country happens to have a decided superiority? Is it to the interest of the world at large that any one people should possess a monopoly? Does our present knowledge, which years hence will certainly be regarded as primitive, justify us in stereotyping and confining within specified channels all branches of industry—does it justify any conviction that those channels are the best that could be developed? Would such a course of action promote general intelligence, enterprise, and advance? Would it not rather have a blighting effect upon the intelligence and industrial progress of nations so restricted? In short, would it not be to enter into conflict with the laws of nature? Nevertheless, these are the conditions which universal Free Trade would have imposed upon the world.

The Free Trader sought arbitrarily to allot industries and trades according to the start which individual races happened to have obtained in them, or, according to the natural advantages possessed by individual countries. This would have placed an artificial restriction

upon the forces of character. In the long run, character often proves to be more fruitful than soil. In fertile countries, favoured by perpetual summer, idle races will be found; in harsher climates, and upon poorer soil, inhabitants more energetic and industrious. Indolent people, whatever their advantages, rarely produce more than enough to support life. Only the vigorous race produces a surplus. Consequently the man who invests in a fertile country inhabited by idle people is less likely to reap a profit than he who buys poorer land where a keener climate has rendered the native hard working and enterprising. Free Trade would have ignored all these considerations. The folly of doing so may be seen in the fact that the Germans have outstripped us in the production of iron and steel —this notwithstanding the start we had of them, and in spite of the immensely superior natural facilities for these industries possessed by Great Britain over Germany. The success of the Germans is due entirely to character. Under Free Trade, however, they could never have competed with us. There must be something radically wrong with a policy which could bar the way of progress and development in this fashion. Fortunately for the world at large, it pronounced against it. Incidentally, it is amusing to consider how vastly

different the face of the industrial world now is from what it would have been had Free Trade spread to other countries, choked their nascent industries, and prevented their development, leaving Great Britain, as formerly, the workshop of the world. The followers of the prophet Cobden must find this food for reflection highly indigestible. The industrial prosperity of the United States and Germany, which could never have arisen under Free Trade, must be a bitter pill for them.

No policy can be permanently successful which fails to take into account the power of growth and of national ambition. Nations must be free to develop in their own fashion. A strong plant may be distorted, but the force of growth within it will split rocks and crack stone walls, and while it lives it will continue to grow. At best Free Trade would have arrested development, and made the world a sort of stationary Chinese world. What is more likely, however, is that it would have made of it a rapidly retrograding world.

WE CULTIVATE WEAKNESS, NOT STRENGTH

Economically a children's free-food fund would be of greater benefit to the nation than old-age pensions.

If we wish to be strong we must glorify strength, not weakness.

Instead of stopping the springs of evil, we set ourselves the hopeless task of baling out the swamps which they create.

A CHILDREN'S free-food fund would be of greater benefit to the nation than such an indiscriminate old-age pension as is now in force. Economically, it would be more profitable to give fresh milk and nourishment and fresh-air to the rising generation than to support the wreckage of the generation that is passing away. We do a vast amount

for the poor, the sick, the crippled, the idle, the criminal, and the useless. We do hardly anything for the young and growing, we actually over-tax and discourage the vigorous, the thrifty, and industrious in the interests of the loafer. Obviously we cannot trim the branches of the human tree, and cut away the dead wood as we cut it away in an orchard. But we might recognise the fact that in dealing with humanity, we are dealing with forces of Nature; and these, for the most part, we can only modify in the young. Moreover, Nature's law is free from sentiment; we must bow to it. Still it need not control us entirely. The whole trend of modern legislation in this country is towards a sickly and destructive sentimentalism. It penalises the worthy in the interests of the unworthy. It is governed by an exaggerated sympathy for weakness, and by a morbid interest in the worthless. Thus it encourages social debility. Instead of attempting to stop the springs of evil, we set ourselves the hopeless task of baling out the malarious swamps which they create. If we wish to be strong, we must reward and glorify strength, not weakness.

BRITONS CAN MANAGE BRITISH BUSINESS

It is asserted that Protection would lead to bribery here. Bribery is no more the result of opportunity, than theft is that of property.

Formerly we arranged our tariffs without corruption. Have we grown so venal under Free Trade that this is no longer possible?

FREE Traders assert that the introduction of Protection here would lead to unrestrained bribery and corruption. This unnecessary insult to the nation smacks of the pro-Boer and anti-Briton, and affords curious evidence of the unpatriotic spirit engendered by Free Trade. In the days of Protection, Englishmen would never have alleged that their countrymen were too dishonest to perform duties of State that other races find it possible to accomplish without reproach.

Bribery and corruption are no more the

result of opportunity than theft is that of property. Safes do not seek the burglar; the burglar can always find a safe to rob. Without recourse to Protection endless fields for bribery and corruption would be found to exist if the genius of the nation lay in that direction. When we so arranged our tariffs that we became the richest nation upon earth, were we more corrupt than now? Or have we become so venal under Free Trade that we are no longer fit to manage our own affairs? If it has come to this, that we must continue our emasculate policy of inaction and allow other nations to control our business for us, because we are unfit to govern it ourselves, Free Trade has much to answer for. Such was not formerly the case.

SECOND MARKETS

Of all countries, Great Britain is economically the most favourably endowed by Nature. We have done but little to improve, and much to neutralise, our advantages.

No nation possesses the magnificent second markets that might be ours in the Colonies if we dealt wisely with them.

Of all countries, Great Britain would appear to be economically the most favourably endowed by Nature. Defensively our position might easily be rendered impregnable; security is, therefore, within our grasp. Our seaboard and harbours, the juxtaposition of our coal and iron, the close proximity of our manufacturing towns and centres to the sea, all give us immense natural advantages over our rivals—advantages which it is to be regretted that, failing a national policy, we have

done next to nothing to improve, and much to neutralise. In the matter of second markets we are equally well placed. No nation possesses the magnificent second markets that we might possess in our Colonies if we dealt wisely with them. In the fierce economic struggle between nations that is commencing, the question of second markets will become of more and more importance. We may probably assume that, in the near future, foreign markets will be virtually closed to one another in so far as profit from them is concerned, since entrance into them will certainly have to be paid for, directly or indirectly, at its full value. Consider the advantages we shall then enjoy if we have consolidated the Empire and have succeeded in arranging a preferential system of tariffs between Great Britain and her Colonies! When we remember the all but impossibilities that our forefathers overcame in founding the Empire, shall a little matter of tariffs, to solve which calls only for some ingenuity and goodwill, prevent us from completing their work? Has such a world-wide prospect of power and prosperity no attraction for the present generation?

THE COUNTRY'S AVERAGE WAGE

Great Britain does not live by her Trade Unionists alone.

Trade Unionists number less than one-tenth of the working population of these islands. The wages paid to them, therefore, are no evidence of the condition of the labourer and the labour market here.

Only average wages throughout a country afford a true basis for comparison.

In comparing the wages paid in Great Britain with those paid in other countries, it is customary to quote the rates received here by Trade Unionists. Trade Unions have been longer in existence, are better organised, and more powerful in this country than in any other. Undoubtedly it is the fact that they have forced the wages of their members up to a high level—a level which, by comparison

with the rates obtained here by other workers, seems artificial. But the proportion of Trade Unionists to the rest of our working population is estimated at one-tenth, or even less. Evidently Great Britain does not live by her Trade Unionists alone. What would be the average rate of wages here were it calculated from the combined mass of Trade Unionists and non-Unionists? What would it be if the calculation dealt with the whole working population, including partially employed and unemployed? A comparison of rates of wages is only instituted with a view to comparing the relative prosperity of working classes generally. Failing this, it is useless. Only an average of wages throughout a country is therefore of any importance. The wealth per head of the inhabitants of a State is not computed from the fortunes of its little band of millionaires, nor should the wages that rule be calculated from the rates obtained by a favoured minority. To say that a certain rate of wages is paid in this country to Trade Unionists means nothing, unless the fact be mentioned that this rate is quite abnormal, that the recipients of it are generally working upon short time, and that there is always a very large proportion of the working classes in receipt of no wages at all, but merely of outdoor relief.

IF TRUSTS, THEN BRITISH TRUSTS

We can always deal with British Trusts. Not so with foreign Trusts, if we have allowed them to destroy our home industries and so reduce us to dependence upon the foreigner.

It is said that Protection will introduce Trusts among us. We already have them. What else are the "shipping conferences," the "traffic arrangements" between our railway companies? Moreover, Trusts only exert such power as is permitted to them by the indifference of the people. These need not, unless they choose, submit to tyranny or imposition. When Trusts become oppressive, they can deal with them, if they be British Trusts. But if the competition of home industries has been eliminated, and the people have become dependent upon foreign Trusts for goods which are produced abroad, they cannot fix their prices.

It seems probable that Trusts are an inevi-

table development of modern business methods. These are the days of great aggregations of capital and organisations in business. If, therefore, we must in any case deal with Trusts, let them be British rather than foreign Trusts.

LABOUR'S TRUE INTERESTS

The true producer is he who, by producing a surplus, contributes to the comfort of others and to the wealth of his country.

When the labourer is protected against the employer, similar goods to those which the employer manufactures being allowed (in the labourer's interests) to enter the country free, that labourer ceases to be a producer.

Whatever the form of Government, Capital must still be indispensable. Socialism can but transfer it from its present owners to the untrained and far less efficient hands of State officials. This will largely decrease its productive power.

In a certain academic sense, everyone is at once a consumer and a producer, since everyone who produces consumes, and, theoreti-

cally at least, everyone who consumes must produce. Even the non-productive loafer encourages production—at the expense of others. To be practical, however, the true producer is the agent or cause of production upon a scale that, so far as his own needs are concerned, is superfluous. The true producer is the discoverer, the combiner, and concentrator of forces, which, but for him, would either remain idle, or be employed disconnectedly and wastefully—the man who, goaded by ambition, labours not merely under compulsion of want, but voluntarily continues his labours after his own immediate and personal needs are satisfied. In short, from the point of view of national business, the true producer is he who is instrumental in producing a surplus, who, by accumulating capital and reserves, contributes to the wealth of his country, and fosters her trade. This is the man who originally created trade, who gave us leisure, the arts and sciences, all comfort and luxury, the power to befriend and relieve others—in a word, this is the man to whom we owe our civilisation. But for him we should still be living from hand to mouth. using screens of bark and skins instead of clothes, overhanging rocks instead of houses, fingers instead of forks. Nevertheless, this is the man whom Socialists now represent as the

arch enemy of his kind, and seek to exterminate.

By most Socialists, the workman is regarded as the sole and only producer. Where a Government combines with Trade Unions to *protect* the labourer against his employer, and to undermine the industries which the latter directs, by admitting into the country, untaxed (in the supposed interests of the workman), the goods that foreign branches of the industry in question produce, it must be wrong to class the workman as a producer. He only produces involuntarily and of necessity, producing no more than he himself consumes, adding, therefore, nothing to the wealth of his country. To the limit of his voluntary power he opposes production and impedes it. He does his utmost to neutralise the productive powers of the man of ability, and incidentally to prevent the industrial growth of the nation. The result of this course of action is scarcity of employment and low wages.

Unwilling manual labour alone can never do more than barely support life. The intellectual forces, which alone can achieve more than this, will only exert themselves under the influence of rewards which stimulate the imagination. Labour's sole hope of increased fertility lies, therefore, in a willing combina-

tion of forces with the intellectual qualities of the Industrial Leader. If the latter is protected and encouraged by a Government, that Government has a right to intervene and see to it that the workman receives his fair share of the prosperity which he and his employer together create. Herein lies the only possibility of practical reform. Crush the leader and you crush the workman also. The body that is without a brain is helpless. Socialist nostrums cannot alter economic laws and laws of Nature. Whatever the form of Government, Capital will still be indispensable—and so also will rent, and interest, and rewards, if prosperity is desired. All that Socialism can do is to transfer Capital from the hands of its present owners into the untrained and far less efficient hands of State officials. In nearly all business nowadays the margin of profit, where there is a profit, is a small one. A very little bad or extravagant management or slackness permitted on the part of the employees would convert it into a loss. Judging by our experience of municipal enterprises, the business which was not a dead loss in the hands of officials, Socialists or otherwise, would be the rare exception. Our productive powers as a nation (all business being under such management) would enormously decrease. The workman would inevitably be far worse in-

stead of better off. Labour would still be unwilling; the power to coerce it of the "Capitalists," as represented by State officials, would, however, be immeasurably increased. Strikes would become impossible. The State would own us body and soul. Our children would no longer be ours; our women would be at the mercy of the officials; our laboriously developed civilisation would disappear. Nor would there be any prospect of deliverance from such conditions, for the power of the State would be despotic, whilst the incentives which now encourage the man of genius, who alone enriches his country, and so softens the lot of man, would be gone.

People are apt to consider that inventions are the gift of inspiration, the result of chance, and that they will continue to be brought forth under Socialism. But in the great majority of cases they are the result of prolonged study and costly experiment with a definite object in view, under the stimulus derived from the hope of reward. Neither inventions nor rich mines are the result of chance. As a rule, both reward the man who has devoted years of hard labour to the search for them—this with the hope of ultimate reward. No man would so devote labour if he knew that its reward was to be taken away from him. On a large scale the operation of

this law is to be noted in Great Britain to-day. Free Trade deprives us of the proper fruits of genius, enterprise, and labour. Other nations profit more by what we do discover and invent than we ourselves. Whereas, therefore, this was once the home of discovery and invention but a small percentage of discoveries now originate here. The courage, enterprise, and genius which characterised the people in years gone by are lacking now, because they lack encouragement. Free Trade deprives such qualities of the fruits which should be theirs. The results of Socialism would be similar, only its effects would be infinitely more far-reaching and disastrous.

GERMANY AND HER NAVY

Germany must *have colonies; ours are the colonies most suitable in every way for her purpose.*

A prohibitive duty imposed upon all German goods now entering Great Britain would automatically stop the building of the German Navy.

THE prosperity of Germany is like a house built upon a slender shaft. She has no market of her own abroad, and as tariff walls are raised, it will become more and more difficult for her to obtain access to such markets. Our market has been to her at once a gold mine in times of prosperity and a safety valve in times of depression. She looks ahead and is fully alive to the situation. She realises that, with her rapidly increasing industries and population, the "house" aforesaid must topple over and fall, unless she

provides a firmer foundation for it. Germany *must have* second markets, and she *must* arrange for the security of her supplies of raw material and food. She *must* acquire dominions in a temperate zone, or lose the stream of emigrants that in a few years will begin again to leave her shores. She is not content to treat these vital questions in the reckless fashion that satisfies our Governments and people. Therefore, she is looking for colonies. Ours are the colonies most suitable in every way for her purpose. Will they continue to be ours? Not unless we can carry Tariff Reform and consolidate the Empire. Failing this, in a few years' time, it will no longer be possible for us to maintain the two-Power standard of the Navy. Indeed, it seems possible that we shall not even be able to outbuild the German Navy alone.

If these were the days of Elizabeth or Cromwell we should proceed without delay to impose a prohibitive duty on all German goods now entering this country. At the present time, the effect of this would be so to dislocate Germany's trade and finances, that the increase in her navy must automatically stop. Meanwhile, it would not be difficult for us to produce for ourselves or buy elsewhere the goods that we import from Germany.

CLASS-HATRED IS SUICIDE

Blindness to true self-interest is the natural retribution of the selfish.

Classes are as closely interdependent as trades.

Fundamental systems base themselves automatically on natural and economic laws.

To abolish class is to abolish progress. Nations cannot advance in mass. There is no exercise which cultivates all the muscles of the body at once.

BLINDNESS to true self-interest is the retribution of the selfish. Class-hatred and trade jealousy defeat themselves, for classes, like trades, are closely interdependent. The horizon of that man who stands for only one class extends but to the end of his own nose.

Healthy, prosperous, and contented working classes, with free scope for their legitimate ambitions, are essential to the well-being of a nation. But no less essential are the directive ability and capital of the leader.

It will generally be found that fundamental social systems have based themselves automatically upon natural laws; and that to reverse these successfully demands wiser foresight than is vouchsafed even to omniscient Radicals and Socialists. Classes are in all probability, therefore, necessary in the social fabric, as indispensable to progress. The lowest tribes we know of are those in which absolute equality obtains. Socialism is opposed to natural law. Like Free Trade, the effect of Socialism would be to abolish all genuine competition; and neither competition nor anything else that is sham can produce results that are sound. There is a limit at which a tax ceases to be profitable to the State. Raised beyond this point, its effect is to reduce the consumption of the taxed article. So it is with the restrictions that Socialism seeks to place upon the productive forces of genius. Over-tax these, and they will cease to operate and produce. Brain is the fire, labour the fuel, which produce the warmth of comfort and prosperity. They work together or not at all. A scientific and

equitable adjustment of their relations is all that is possible to the reformer. To abolish class is to abolish progress. Nations cannot advance in mass. There is no exercise that cultivates all the muscles in the body at once.

THE TAX ON WHEAT

Corn now carries what is tantamount to five times the duty that Mr. Chamberlain proposed to put on it, yet no one remarks upon the price of bread.

All that the present Government has taken off the workman's food is the workman himself.

At the last election we were told by Free Traders that a 2s. duty on corn would be disastrous to the working man. Corn is now 10s. per quarter higher than it was when the present Government came into power—that is to say, it carries what is tantamount to five times the duty which Mr. Chamberlain's scheme would have imposed on it. (At the same time we are still without the compensating advantage which he sought, of reciprocity with the Colonies.) The advance in the price of the quartern loaf is from ½d. in some places

to 1d. in others. Do we hear any especial outcry about the price of bread? Hard times notwithstanding, the point is scarcely mentioned. It is certain that if work were plentiful, even what amounts to a 10s. tax upon wheat would scarcely be felt. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that Mr. Chamberlain proposed to reduce the taxation upon other articles of food, if it proved that his 2s. tax on wheat increased the price of bread. What has the present Government taken off food? In order to bribe the electors of Dundee, they reduced the tax on sugar, which has benefited nobody except the German producer, and has cost the Exchequer £2,500,000. This with the Old-Age Pension scheme, also hastily announced before the Dundee election, in order to further Mr. Winston Churchill's chances of election, makes his services somewhat expensive. What has the present Government taken off the workman's food? Nothing but the workman himself, by driving capital out of the country and reducing employment.

THE LITTLE-ENGLANDER RAT

Trade follows the Flag. Unfortunately, it is not our trade, but chiefly that of protected countries.

Sentiment in public business is the intemperance of the criminally benevolent classes.

Personal feelings largely originate in and are governed by personal interests.

Like the rats in an old ship the Little Englanders are always with us—always anxious to "gnaw the painter," and set the Colonies adrift.

TRADE follows the Flag. Unfortunately, it is not our trade, but chiefly that of protected countries. Those who know best express the fear that, unless our connection with the Colonies is reorganised upon an economic

basis, the pressure of their growing industries will force them to leave us. The thoughtless retort:—"If the loyalty of the Colonies depends upon trade interests, it is not very exalted."

The chief point of contact between two peoples lies in their respective Governments. Between the representatives of these the relationship is a business one; the more business-like it is the less likely is it to be disturbed. Sentiment in public matters is the intemperance of the criminally benevolent classes. It is a sign perhaps of the growing irresponsibility of the times, and though it may appear harmless, yet, like a simple cold, it often leads to the most dangerous complications. To responsible officials sentiment is forbidden; nor does their training incline them to indulge in it. Whether we will or not, therefore, our connection with the Colonies assumes a business character. The more reason for the policy which governs it being of a wise and liberal nature.

Doubtless there are men in the Colonies in whom loyalty outweighs business considerations. Such men exist here also. But the fact remains that among business men (a great source of strength in any State) personal feelings largely originate in and are governed by personal interests; and both are

best insured when they run in the same groove.

The relations between the various Dependencies of an Empire can never be too closely interwoven. Disintegrating forces must always be at work. Sentiment, however charming and decorative it may be, is powerless against the clash of passion and self-interest. It is consequently not practical as the sole bond of union between two nations —especially when, in one of them, the cult of Imperialism has as many opponents as it has with us. As a popular movement here Imperialism is of recent growth. The extent to which it influences the masses has yet to be proved. Unfortunately, nothing is done among them to dispel the ignorance which prevents its advantages from being realised. On the other hand, like the rats in an old ship the Little-Englanders are always with us, and always active—always anxious to "gnaw the painter," and set the Colonies adrift. Since they are mostly Radicals, we know the disinterested motives which they profess. That even they should be willing to do violence to their feelings, and cut us off from the Colonies merely because they consider them unprofitable, is a striking example of the power wielded by personal interests over

sentiment. In the face of it, what right have we to expect the loyalty of the Colonies to be invincible?

"Is the loyalty of the Colonies so weak that it is to be influenced by material motives?" As well might the Colonies ask, "Is the loyalty of the Old Country so shallow that, in her own selfish interests, she refuses even to test a little matter of reciprocity with us? She knows that economic forces *must* divide us if she does not stretch out her hand to prevent it. What right has she to place us in such a dilemma, that our loyalty and our national interests unavoidably conflict?"

THE SEEDS OF DECAY

The last seeds sown by nearly all the great nations in the past have been the seeds of decay sown in abandoning agriculture.

The nation that depends upon mercenaries for defence is doomed.

Can service be termed voluntary in that army a large percentage of whose recruits only enlist under the compulsion of want?

Can any nation withstand the perpetual drain upon its finances caused by the purchase of such unprofitable raw material as food-stuffs from abroad?

It is probably an economic law that no people should depend upon other races for their food supply.

War will inevitably overtake us sooner or later. History affords no example of the horrors that may await a foodless nation so beset.

THE last seeds sown by nearly all the great nations in the past have been the seeds of decay which they sowed in abandoning agriculture. The Phœnicians, the Athenians, the Rhodians, the Carthagenians, the Romans, the Dutch, all afford proofs of this. They neglected agriculture for commerce, with the result that they unanimously became disinclined to serve their countries in arms, and hence enlisted mercenaries for this purpose. The nation that depends for its safety upon mercenaries is doomed. We set great store by what we call our voluntary system of service. But can service in our Army be called voluntary when a very large percentage of its numbers only enlist under compulsion—the compulsion of want. Where people submit willingly to national service, a national Army is far more voluntary than such an Army as ours. Military spirit is evidently lacking here, or our Army would be a fair representative sample of the manhood, intelligence, and character of the people. This, however, is not so much the point as the question of the

neglect of agriculture in this country. I have touched elsewhere upon the loss in character and courage, in health and strength, and sense of patriotism suffered by the nation which abandons agriculture. It remains for me to touch upon the economic question involved. Can any nation, however rich, withstand the perpetual drain upon its finances caused by the purchase of its food-stuffs from abroad? Unlike raw material which is used in manufactures and sold again, after providing profitable employment for the masses, these food-stuffs, beyond what the parasitic middleman derives from them, afford little or no employment or profit to anyone.

They only enable us to produce emigrants, who leave these shores to swell the man-power of other nations. To impoverish ourselves and, in doing so, to increase the strength of other races, is disastrous. Something must be radically wrong in a policy which produces such results. It seems probable that it is contrary to economic law for any people to depend upon the exertions of others for their food-supply. And the violation of economic laws is apt to bring about its own retribution. This we already suffer in a loss of national courage, health, physical strength, wealth, and power: all misfortunes which are likely to intensify with time. Besides, we must remember that

the population of the world is rapidly increasing. We shall not always be able to get food from abroad. The day when the United States, for instance, will cease to supply us is fast approaching. Even if our finances, therefore, stand the continued strain imposed upon them by our folly, we shall still be forced sooner or later to till the soil again for ourselves. The question is, Shall we till it as free men, or as a subjected race? In the light of the world's experience, the latter seems to be the more probable, if we elect to wait until actually driven to the work. There is perhaps nothing that is more important to us than the revival of agriculture. We have 47,000,000 acres of land in this country capable of producing wheat. Eight million acres would supply the wheat we need.[1] To ensure the recreation of a healthy peasantry, and to ensure ourselves against seeing bread at famine prices within a week of the declaration of war with any great Power, is worth some temporary sacrifice. War is morally certain to overtake us sooner or later. What will be our position from the point of view of the food question when it does occur? History provides us with no example from which we can gauge the horrors that may be in store for us in such a case.

[1] *Fiscal Facts and Fictions*, by F. G. Shaw, p. 158.

EDUCATION AND PATRIOTISM

Unless education is to be of service in after-life, the time and money spent upon it are thrown away.

Brains are a national asset; wherever they can be discovered, they should be cultivated, even at the nation's cost.

Religion is the greatest ally of Government.

Patriotism is an almost invincible national force; it is the only power which can counteract the disintegrating effects of party Government.

In the matter of education we seem to be on the wrong road. The system followed by a sensible father is probably the right one. He educates his children with a view to the requirements of the positions they are likely to be called upon to fill. Children should be

taught that which will serve them in the path of life which their means and temperaments enable them to pursue. To bring up all our children to be clerks and school teachers displays a foolish disregard for the demands of employment. Unless education is to be of some assistance to its possessor, the time and money spent on it are wasted. The only way in which it can materially benefit the masses is by fitting boys and girls to get their livings. That can be but a mischievous perversion of it which renders them dissatisfied with the walks in life in which this object is to be attained. Such, however, seems to be the general effect of training in our schools. A contempt for labour and service is a dangerous sentiment for any nation to cultivate systematically. Above all, education should be practical. With the rudiments of general knowledge the children of the poor should be taught the first lessons in some handicraft or trade. So much the better for the children of the rich if they received similar instruction. If, in the course of training, a child be discovered who displays unusual ability, no consideration of class or means should be allowed to stand in its way. Brains are a national asset. Wherever they can be discovered, they should be encouraged, even at the nation's cost. If such a policy as this were adopted

many a man would be enlisted upon the side of reason, of construction, and of true national interests, who now drifts into the ranks of Socialism, and becomes a force for destruction.

Religious education in our schools is indispensable. The deplorable results of educating children without religion may be read to-day in the criminal annals of France. In religious instruction we find the only means we have of inculcating a moral code. Religion is the greatest ally of Government. Without it and the duty of self-denial which it teaches, Government would soon become impossible.

The advantages which the United States and Germany reap from the enthusiastic patriotism of their people are hardly to be over-estimated. With Americans and Germans it becomes an almost invincible national force. They recognise the fact, and systematically cultivate patriotism in their schools. We should do well to follow their example, adding to such instruction as wide a knowledge as possible of the Empire, its advantages, responsibilities, and glories. Our children should be taught to think imperially. How else can they fill the

rôle of imperial citizens. Moreover, an alert and sensitive patriotism is the only power that can counteract the disintegrating effects in a nation of party Government. Unless the feeling of patriotism over-rides party jealousy, State interests will inevitably become the shuttlecock of politicians. To our shame be it said that State interests suffer far less from party selfishness in Germany and America than is the case here.

INTEMPERATE LEGISLATORS

Intemperance in legislation is the most pernicious form of insobriety.

To attempt robbery in order to prevent the lesser offence of drunkenness is burlesque morality.

If the Government believes that drunkenness is to be repressed by arbitrary means, let it remove all temptations. It is folly to plug one tap when the cask of drink has taps all round it.

Issue licences to drink to the sober, and withhold them from the drunkard.

A temperance Reform Bill which leaves drunkenness untouched, while it severely punishes the sober, and legalises robbery, invites careful consideration.

Those who see furthest are the slowest to invoke legislation.

THE temperance fanatic would do well to remember that intemperance is reprehensible in any form. Intemperance in legislation is, perhaps, its most pernicious aspect. The late Licensing Bill was undoubtedly an intemperate measure. It was a clear-cut precedent in Socialistic confiscation. Had it become law, no form of property would thereafter have been secure. To have attempted robbery in order to prevent the lesser offence of drunkenness was burlesque morality. To have endeavoured to penalise the sober, in order that the drunkard might be protected against himself, displayed a lamentable lack of logic and ingenuity. In these democratic days those laws only are effective which are supported by public opinion. Public opinion would never have supported regulations so manifestly unfair to the sober majority. No one professes such a religious regard for the rights of majorities as the Radical, yet no one is more ready to over-ride these rights than he when in pursuit of his own or his party's interests. If the Government really believed it possible to make people sober by Act of Parliament, or

to give effect to arbitrary measures without the support of public opinion, why did not it act consistently? Why were not "off licences" and clubs threatened in the same way as "on licences"? Of what use would it have been to plug one tap when the cask of drink had taps all round it? Or, if "off licences" and clubs were to be deemed sacred, why not have proposed to deal arbitrarily with the drunkard himself by increasing the penalties for drunkenness? Almost any embarrassment directed against the sot, no matter how fanciful and Socialistic in its coercive spirit it might have been, would have met with some support. Even licences to drink issued to the sober and withheld from the drunkard would have been preferable to a disingenuous and ineffective measure which would have left drunkenness unreformed, and only have resulted in legalising robbery. To rob the industrious and trample upon the rights of the innocent in order to offer purely illusory protection to the idle and worthless would have been to set a worse example than that set by the drunkard himself. Of the two in a community, the drunkard is in many respects to be preferred to the fanatic. As a rule, he only injures *himself*. The fanatic, however, whose mania is legislating *for others*, resembles a

mad dog. He snaps at everyone in his path, and, foaming at the mouth, rushes madly on, whither he cannot tell, nor does he care.

Drunkenness is largely decreasing. The credit for this fact is in no sense due to any repressive measures. It is in consequence of education, example, fashion—of amusements and attractions which now occupy men when, formerly, they would have been idle. Men occupied and interested do not drink. It is along these lines therefore, that we must work to extinguish inebriety—along these lines and those of physical regeneration. Healthy boys and girls will not develop an inherent craving for drink. They will become men and women able to do a day's work without experiencing the feeling of exhaustion which sooner or later establishes that craving. Moreover, if as children a contempt for drunkenness is instilled into them, they will be the less likely to fall in later life. Repressive measures, such as the passing Government desired to enforce, are more likely to create a spirit of opposition, and drive the sober to drink, than to diminish drunkenness among those already addicted to it. Those who see furthest are the least anxious to invoke legislation. There are few things more characteristic of the marked irre-

sponsibility of the times than the reckless and thoughtless fashion in which faddists legislate and are allowed to legislate here. These impulsive creatures attack the business as though it were a game of ping-pong.

NATIONAL STRONGHOLDS

The strongholds of a nation are its people's hearts.

The sentimental legislator is our most dangerous traitor.

THE safety of a nation lies not in "silver streaks," in mountain chains, or fortresses. The strongholds of a nation are its people's hearts. The statesman, therefore, who, by unsound and sentimental legislation, does anything to sap the strength of his countrymen's character is as faithless and treacherous as the traitor who sells the plans and secrets of his country's defences to a foreign Power.

FUTILE SCHEMING

Our attempts to limit armaments and to secure perpetual peace by arbitration are on a par with the futile endeavour we once made to secure by Free Trade the manufacturing monopoly we formerly possessed.

Accustomed as we have become to bow unhesitatingly to the will of majorities, who dares to say that might is not right?

It is easier to make a fortune than to keep it. It is also easier to inherit an Empire than to preserve it—unless the spirit of its builders descends with it.

Our attempts to limit armaments and, by encouraging arbitration, to secure perpetual peace are on a par with our fatuous endeavour, formerly, to popularise Free Trade. When we set about doing this we had a practical monopoly of the world's manufactures, com-

merce, carrying trade, and capital. Universal Free Trade would have ensured these to us indefinitely. Hence our efforts to impose it upon others.

We now have the largest Navy and the finest Colonial Empire in the world. The expense and anxiety of competing with other nations in the matter of navies is becoming a strain upon us. Therefore we enthusiastically embrace the idea of disarmament. Our view of disarmament is, of course, that we should retain our present superiority unchallenged.

We want nothing further in the way of dominions. We do not even wish to be obliged systematically to develop those we have, although, undeveloped, they offer an almost irresistible temptation to needier races. Therefore we embrace the idea of arbitration and of universal peace, since these would ensure to us the *status quo* without the onus of guarding it.

Such futile scheming smacks of second childhood. The world may not be a den of thieves, but it scorns the fool and mocks at the pretensions of the weak. Might may not always coincide with abstract right, but it has claims which often over-ride it. And, in these days, when we are accustomed to bow without murmuring to the will of majorities, who dares to say that might is not right?

Right or not right, might still receives the verdict. Practical statesmen, therefore, must reckon with it.

Many an individual has found that it is easier to make a fortune than to keep it. The same experience will attend nations in the matter of Empires. If we wish to keep the Empire that we have, we must be prepared to fight for it. Other nations are not interested in preserving it for us.

THE BALANCE OF POWER

The balance of power in Europe is of vital importance to us. If ever it should be destroyed, all Europe will be against us.

In the conflict to preserve this balance, a conflict which will be decided by huge armies upon land, of what value would our assistance be at present?

THE present Government has unintentionally done much to render universal service here unavoidable. By its foolish policy of disarmament, it has directly fostered German ambitions and encouraged Germany to endeavour to outbuild our Navy. This will put every first-class nation in the world to enormous expense, but this has called public attention to the folly of depending upon a single line of defence. German ambitions render it imperative for us, not only to have an Army large enough to defend our own shores, and so set

the Navy free to attack, but large enough to afford assistance to threatened Powers upon the Continent. It is not enough for us to be able to defend these islands. The balance of power in Europe is of vital importance to us. If ever this should be destroyed, all Europe will be against us. Yet at any time it may devolve upon us to fight for its preservation. Of what value would our assistance be at the present time in a conflict which will mainly be decided by huge armies upon land?

THE SUFFRAGETTE AMONG NATIONS

Economic power is like female suffrage, which, unsupported by force, can only exist upon sufferance. Though the wars of the future may be economic wars, therefore, the nation that is without a national army will be but a suffragette among nations.

We have fought before now to keep foreign markets open; other nations may choose to fight to keep ours open. Great Britain is but the China of Europe.

Economic strife engenders greater bitterness than do political disputes. Swayed by the passions it arouses, there is no mercy between nations.

CONCURRENTLY with or, better still, before adopting Protection, we should adopt universal service and form a national Army.

Economic power is like female suffrage, which, unsupported by force, can only exist upon sufferance. Though the wars of the future may be economic wars, therefore, the nation that is without a national Army will be but a suffragette among nations. Foreigners have come to consider that they have an established right to our markets. The loss of free access to them they will feel severely, and any attempt upon our part to close them before, in the natural course of events, they have become valueless, is likely to be resented. There is already a movement on foot to declare economic war against us for the Patents Act. We ourselves have fought before now to keep markets open. Other nations may choose to do the same. The temptation will be strong. Hostile feelings we may surely count upon abroad. Economic strife engenders greater bitterness than do political disputes, since it appeals more directly to personal interests, and these the most selfish that influence us. Swayed by the passions it arouses, there is no mercy among nations, and only one Court of Appeal—the Court of Arms. Unless, therefore, we wish to be "bled like veal," we must cultivate horns.

Seldom has any less English and more shameful advice been given to the people than the appeal to pursue our Free Trade policy,

lest, in modifying it, we should anger other nations. Is not this cowardly Free Trade warning a frank avowal that our policy is of greater advantage to our rivals than to ourselves? Why should we voluntarily confer benefits on those who give us nothing that they are able to prevent in return for them? And if our situation be indeed so desperate that we *must* continue this suicidal course, because we *dare not* change it, what is it that has brought a nation which, sixty years ago, was the strongest and richest in the world to such a contemptible pass? What else but Free Trade?

NAVAL WARFARE IN THE FUTURE

Naval warfare in the future is not likely to be what it has been in the past. The possibilities of the submarine, the air-ship, and the floating mine have yet to be determined.

Naval warfare in the future will be full of the elements of surprise, and probably in nothing more surprising than in the unexpected manner in which it may be sprung on us.

Is it wise to trust to a single line of defence when one reverse may mean to us national disaster and defeat?

To organise and serve in a national army may be irksome to us, but this duty is the iron price of freedom.

NAVAL warfare in the future is not likely to be what it has been in the past. The possibilities of the submarine have yet to be de-

termined. The possibilities of the air-ship, with its effect upon naval warfare, is an even less-known quantity. We have yet to learn what a really scientific and astute foe might accomplish with that terrible weapon, the floating mine, sown broadcast, and before any declaration of war, in order to prevent the junction or approach of fleets.[1] We are ignorant even of the relative value of the various arms which compose the Navy. From the vast battleship down to the little submarine or torpedo-boat, the question of effectiveness is a matter of conjecture and dispute. Since ironclads came into use, our Navy has not been tested. In the meantime everything relating to ships of war has changed. Almost all the work that was once performed on board ship by man-power is now effected by machinery. Have we the superiority in manipulating the latter that we possessed in the exercise of the former? Different qualities and aptitudes are involved; other nations *may* possess them in a greater degree than ourselves. Doubtless our men can still die. It will be more to the point, however, if they can still slay their opponents. Naval warfare in the future will be on a different scale,

[1] We should do well to bear in mind that, at the last Peace Conference, Germany was the Power mainly instrumental in defeating an attempt to restrict the use of the floating mine.

and will make greater calls upon specialised knowledge, on strategic and tactical ability, on judgment, and nerve, and daring than was formerly the case. Past experience under these altered circumstances can serve us but little; actual war alone can decide the complex problems before us. One thing, however, we may rely upon: the next great naval war will be full of the elements of surprise, and probably in nothing more surprising than in the unexpected manner in which it may be sprung upon us. If we are prepared for it, such readiness will be unexampled in our history. No promise of preparation appears in the reckless way in which we are now allowing Germany to draw up to us in the matter of shipbuilding. We imagine that we can safely do this because "we can always build faster than Germany," and so recover lost ground. But this belief is disputed by many good judges, and to risk our safety upon such an issue is infatuation. Consider the effect of a few bombs placed at a given date upon three or four *Dreadnoughts* which were approaching completion, and upon whose completion within a specified time our security depended.

Moreover, *Dreadnoughts*, like motor-cars, will soon be scattered throughout the world. *Dreadnoughts* will be for sale. Naval experts

look to these ships to decide the naval battles of the future. The fate of Empires, therefore, may hang upon the purchase of a few battleships. In this connection it would be interesting if at the next Peace Conference our representatives were to propose measures for regulating, by international law, the sale or transfer of *Dreadnoughts*.

The attitude of Germany upon this subject would be instructive. In any case, the reputed powers of these vessels would seem to make special legislation in regard to them at least worthy of discussion.

In view of these manifold uncertainties, is it wise for us to trust entirely to old-fashioned experience as to the capabilities of our Navy? Is it wise to trust entirely to a single line of defence, when one reverse, the delay of a few hours only, may mean to us national disaster and defeat? We should never for a moment lose sight of the fact that our helpless situation with regard to food supplies renders the danger of reverses immeasurably greater for us than for any other nation. Our Navy should be free as a bird to hunt the seas, free to guard our food routes, and attack the enemy. To anchor it to our shores adds to the criminal folly of starving it.

We do both. We chain our watch-dog up and starve him. The safety of our Empire,

the safety of our homes and women and children, demand a national Army—an Army not merely strong enough to liberate the Navy, but strong enough to bear a heavy hand in preserving the balance of power in Europe, should this be threatened. For, as has been stated already, if ever this balance be destroyed, all Europe will be against us. To organise and serve in such an Army as we require may be irksome to a people grown soft, but this duty is the iron price of freedom. I believe in Englishmen, therefore I believe that that Army will be formed. I believe that if it be formed, it will mark a new departure for us. The discipline and training, the physical regeneration it will entail, the patriotism it will re-arouse, will open a page for us in history as glorious as any in the past. But a little more folding of the hands to sleep, and it will be too late.

If our forefathers could see us hesitating at this crisis, what would they think of us? Those men, the bravest of the brave, with keen, clear eyes, and grip like winter's frost, built up this Empire sword in hand, and christened it in their blood. They did not whine about "the weary Titan"; our lap-dog apathy they never knew. No force could have held them back when England called, for they were her true-bred sons, and manly from heart

to fist. History may be lost in time, but their names will live on in legend, arch-types of the men who *do*. We, if we do not awaken, shall be remembered but as blurred, masterless mobs of sentimental spongers on the State, who sought relief instead of work, and lost their heritage for love of selfish ease.

UNIVERSAL SERVICE

The belief that Britons will refuse to adopt universal service originates in the selfish timidity of our political leaders. All our history gives the lie to it.

The British nation has never failed its statesmen. British statesmen have sometimes failed the nation, but never has such failure been fraught with graver danger to the State than now.

Domestic legislation at the present time is mere buffoonery. It is like manicuring a man who requires a surgical operation to prolong his life.

National service is the finest training men can undergo for work in after-life. The age of individualism is past. Industrial armies

are now concentrated in every field of activity. To neglect national training in this respect is therefore to court downfall.

Military training is as necessary to check the appalling physical deterioration of the British race as to modify our selfish individualism. National armies have done much for both physique and character.

National armies are cheaper than modern navies. Economy will force us to abandon a "single line of defence" the one we now favour being the most expensive line.

WHY should we not establish a national army? Why should the British, with all they have to guard, be free from service that less wealthy nations cheerfully undertake? If we do not protect ourselves, from whom are we to expect this service? It will not be rendered by any ally; of that we may be sure. Before her downfall, Holland had treaties and alliances with all the chief Powers of the day. These did not prevent her destruction when, although rich, she had become weak.

It seems reasonable to believe that the Briton's supposed unwillingness to submit to national service is rather a fiction that origin-

ates in the selfish timidity of his political leaders than an actual fact. It is incredible that the nation could refuse to authorise universal service, if the danger of so doing were only clearly explained to it. All our history gives the lie to such a supposition. Englishmen are not the pitiful and unpatriotic creatures that politicians pretend. There has never been a time when Britons failed their statesmen, although times have been when statesmen failed the nation. At no period in our career, however, has this failure upon the part of our public men been fraught with such danger to the State as now. The country is defenceless in so far as an army is concerned. The future is big with danger for us. Yet our leaders palter and play at vote-catching with domestic legislation. Domestic legislation at the present moment is mere buffoonery. It is like manicuring a man who requires a surgical operation to save his life. It is not *the people* who shirk, or have ever shirked, the question of a national army. The matter has never been seriously put to them. It is their statesmen who, in their own selfish interests, have thrust it aside. They will find it less easy to shirk the responsibility for their cowardice. Should disaster overtake us, they will have to answer for it—and answer for it

some of them probably will, limb by limb. The man who is not prepared to do his duty patriotically by the nation in the matter of its vital interests should not enter public life. And there is no more vital public interest than national defence. There will be no "muddling through" when we get into the "ring" with Germany. A naval reverse, with only three weeks' corn in the country, will mean starving mobs, a cry throughout the land of "Stop the war," and the fight over in a month. These will be dangerous times for some of our politicians.

There are but few of our public men who will not admit privately our need for a national army. How many of them, however, express this belief upon the platform? Yet what do they fear? Is there evidence of any such opposition in the country to universal service as the Free Trade opposition that faced Mr. Chamberlain when he advanced his scheme of Tariff Reform? To-day Tariff Reform has practically won; why should not universal service do the same? Had we more men of Mr. Chamberlain's patriotism and courage—more men who trusted and believed in Englishmen, as he trusted and believed in them—the issue would long since have been raised.

By the way in which the subject is shunned,

it might be imagined that national service spelt national calamity, instead of being the finest training for work in after-life that men can undergo. The Germans attribute much of their commercial success to this military schooling. In these times such training is indispensable. The age of individualism is gone. This is an age of vast organisations and the concentration of vast numbers upon every field of activity. The nation that neglects preparation in this respect will be left behind. We, more than other nations, require it. Individualism with us is often carried to a pitch that is irrational. The disinclination of our people to combine together or to submit to any form of authority, is a grave source of national weakness and incapacity. It is the occasion of endless unemployment, and has driven Englishmen from many occupations. Without doubt these faults in our national character would be largely modified by a course of military training. Even more urgently is it required to check the increasing physical deterioration of the race. We need but glance at the appalling statistics dealing with such subjects in this country to learn that in this particular we are drifting rapidly towards destruction. Any system should be welcome which helps to arrest our

decline. It is a well-known fact that national armies have done much to improve the physique of the people who possess them. All question of the country's urgent military necessities aside, therefore, much remains to be said in favour of universal service. Nor need the period of service with the colours be a long one if every boy in every school in the country be drilled and taught to shoot. A few months will suffice then to turn them into soldiers.

Sooner or later we shall be forced to establish a national army, whether we will or not. Economy already urges us to do so. National armies are cheaper than modern navies. In any case, a national army will cost far less than such a navy as *we* shall soon be required to maintain. A real army in point of numbers need cost no more than is spent upon our present toy forces. It would make our position unassailable at home. This would in a great measure relieve our Navy from the task of defending our shores—a task which, for various reasons, it is becoming almost impossible for it to carry out securely. Thus it would be free to exercise its proper function of attack, and thus, without any important increase in its strength, we should automatically regain our superiority at sea. Certain

it is that we shall not always be able to support the outlay which attends our present policy. Economy must oblige us to abandon a "single line of defence" when the one we favour is the most expensive line.

BROKEN REEDS

Treaties and alliances can only be relied upon with confidence by the strong. They do but lure the weak to slumber until awakened by defeat.

TREATIES and alliances can only be relied upon with confidence by the strong. To the weak they are merely an inducement to slumber in inaction until awakened by defeat. Treaties are only bargains involving concessions upon both sides. What can the weak concede that may not be taken from them without compensation at the convenience of the strong? Only the rights of the strong and courageous are respected. Even the strongest hesitate to flout the vigorous and brave.

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